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News & Policy

Recap of June's ELO Innovation Summer Conversation ELO's Role in Cultivating Purpose in Youth

Beyond School Bells Summer Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Summer Conversation Series continued in June with our second guest, Christopher Davis, a PhD candidate in Developmental Psychology at Cornell University. Chris was part of the team from Cornell's [Purpose and Identity Processes Lab](#) who presented at Nebraska's ELO Innovation Invitational in March, and we were honored he was able to again join us on an hour long webinar to expand on this topic as we explore emerging issues in ELO.

The research is increasingly clear: across a variety of indicators and different measures of life success, having a sense purpose plays an important role in healthy development. This is true at all phases in life. ELO staff, because of their close relationships with youth in their programs, play key roles in helping youth along this developmental path. This was the message Dr. Anthony Burrows from Cornell University delivered at the keynote on the second day our Invitational, summarized in this edited [recording](#).

In June's Innovation Conversation, Chris expanded on the idea that ELO programs play a critical role in helping youth identify interests and cultivate purpose. ELO staff have the ability to connect with youth, listen to their ideas and see trends in their interests. Due to this proximity and the activities they facilitate, ELO staff can help guide youth towards experiences which, over time, can help them identify strengths and ultimately cultivate purpose. Importantly, Chris suggested that ELO staff, by bringing their own sense of purpose into the programs they facilitate, can have a powerful impact by showing youth the impact on purpose in action.

We are grateful to Chris for helping to introduce us to this topic and prompting the great conversation that followed. You can view an edited version of our June webinar [here](#).

July's ELO Innovation Summer Conversation **Gender Inequities & the Role of ELO Programs: Of Boys and Men**

In recent years, afterschool and summer learning programs have mobilized to address the urgent problem of the underrepresentation of women in STEM professions. While this important work is far from complete, the Million Girl Moonshot and other initiatives have demonstrated how ELO programs can inspire, engage, and prepare girls to become builders, innovators, makers, and problem solvers. Beyond School Bells is proud to be a partner in the Million Girl Moonshot and related efforts and recently returned from the annual Girls Build Solution meeting in Atlanta.

With the success of these efforts, OST leaders are beginning to explore how programs might also address some of the unique challenges and inequities facing boys and young men, especially young men of color. Join us for an engaging conversation about provocative new research on the underperformance of boys in school and the underrepresentation of men in the HEAL professions (Health, Education, Administration, and Literacy). We will be using [this video](#), summarizing the main arguments in Richard Reeves recent Of Boys and Men to help us frame this hour-long culmination to our Summer Conversation Series.

This will be a multifaceted conversation featuring Antiwan Tate, Executive Director, My Brother's Keeper Alliance of South Carolina and Jeff Cole, Network Lead for Beyond School Bells and will take place on **Monday, July 31 12-1pm CT via Zoom**.



Use the QR code to the left or [this link](#) to register now to participate in this important conversation, the last in our summer series.

Announcements & Opportunities

Raising Youth Voice in Nebraska: Youth Leadership Council (YLC) Spring Highlights and Fall Applications *Applications due August 1, 2023*



Over the Spring 2023 semester, a total of 11 high school students from 7 different communities across Nebraska completed the inaugural Spring 2023 YLC experience. Throughout the semester, students developed their YLC projects, received professional development, and learned from their peers about how to engage students in their afterschool programs. Here is what one student had to say about the experience:

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"I loved hearing the ideas other high-school students in my area had. It allowed me to reflect back on my experiences and be more open-minded about opportunities/experiences in the future. Meeting a group of driven students who care about their students (and students' families) was very beneficial in my eyes, and I learned new tactics I can incorporate into [my] after-school program."
”

Through this semester-long experience, students brainstormed and proposed ways to either improve upon an existing program or fill an unmet need within their afterschool community. Project topics included the addition of a life skills afterschool club, increased professional development opportunities for staff, and changing systems to incorporate more youth voice in club offerings. Council members received training and support throughout this experience so that their final projects included budgets, timelines, and anticipated barriers to implementation. Several projects are now in the process of being implemented in students' afterschool programs! To learn more about the 2023 Cohort, visit our website at beyondschoolbells.org/youth-voice/youth-leadership-council.



If this experience sounds like something one of your high school staff members might be interested in – you are in luck!

A new cohort of the BSB YLC will begin this fall and applications for the Fall 2023 Cohort are open now! If you know any high school students who are currently working at their afterschool or summer program who might be interested, please encourage them to apply [here](#) or using the QR code to the left.

Applications for the Fall 2023 BSB YLC Cohort are due August 1, 2023.

For more information about this experience or the application process, please visit our [website](#) or reach out to Lauren Clark at lclark@nebraskachildren.org.

Conservation Management Internship – That's a Wrap!



Thanks to all of the many partners, organizations, leaders, and participants, the 2023 Conservation Management Internship was an incredible success! The internship returned this year with the tried-and-true format of learning directly from conservation experts and practitioners and contributing to their work. Last month, two cohorts of students offered their time and hard work from Scotts Bluff to the Missouri River. Students learned directly from conservation experts about what conservation looks like in different locations and professions across Nebraska and why those efforts are so crucial to our environment and communities.



Students participated in restoring native prairies, planting pollinators, clearing invasive species, wildlife management, forest management, and so much more! Conservation efforts are widespread and unique - students got to see firsthand that conservation is not any single isolated career or action. Rather, it is a collective effort that depends on networks of professionals, organizations, and passionate leaders. We are so grateful for the opportunity to help connect students to the important work going on across the state and introduce those doing the work to the next generation of environmental stewards.

We want to give a special thank you to the organizations involved: Thank you to the Nebraska Environmental Trust for making this internship possible; to the partners along the way for their time, effort, and resources: Nebraska Game and Parks, Prairie Plains Resource Institute, Cedar Point Biological Station, North Platte NRD, Crane Trust, Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, and Fontenelle Forest; and to the mentors and students who committed their time and effort to learning about conservation in Nebraska!



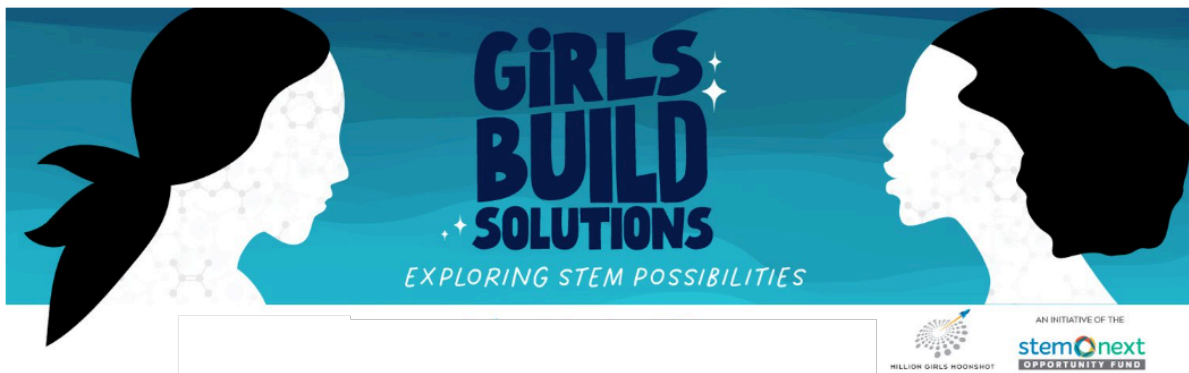
We acknowledge that the Conservation Management Internship takes place along the past, present, and future homelands of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Lipan Apache, Omaha, Otoe-Missouria, and Pawnee Peoples and wish to honor their historic and ongoing stewardship.



Beyond School Bells is honored to share that we're partnering with [Go Beyond](#) this July. Go Beyond is a leader in providing unique, immersive, and impactful outdoor experiences to youth who need it most. Through the power of nature and leadership by example, Go Beyond takes students "away from the city and technology, out of their comfort zone, and challenges them to try new things". BSB is excited to learn from their expertise and partner to grow both of our efforts to serve Nebraska's youth with outdoor and environmental programs. Stay tuned for an update next month!

Million Girls Moonshot (MGM) News & Resources

The 2023 Girls Build Solutions Conference Gives Inspiration for Year 4 of MGM



Joined by over 30 other states in Atlanta, GA, Beyond School Bells team members and partners were inspired by the three-day Girls Build Solutions conference hosted by STEMNext as a part of the Million Girls Moonshot Initiative, bringing back new and innovative ways to engage more girls and underrepresented youth in STEM afterschool. Nebraska representatives collaborated with those from across the country to learn more about what makes a quality STEM club or activity, the importance of elevating youth voice and providing STEM role models girls can relate to, and how to collect and use meaningful data from those implementing STEM activities in the afterschool and summer space. We look forward to

sharing the tools and resources we learned with our partners and programs to continue this important work!

MGM Summer Learning Week July 10-14

53 years ago, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin made history when they became the first human beings to set foot on the moon. The Million Girls Moonshot is aiming for the future, to soar beyond the moon, launching the next generation of engineers and scientists. What will be their “giant leap”? And most importantly, how do we, as Networks, partners, and program providers, support young people on their journey to explore the galaxy of possibilities within STEM?

[July 10-14 is Summer Learning Week](#) - themes for the week include: Love of Literacy & Learning; Amazing Arts; Wonders of Wellness, Health & Sports; STEM; Community & Leadership. Check out [NSLA's page](#) for tools and ideas.

Hiring Interns or Teen Leaders for the Summer? - An Asynchronous Course



Click2ComputerScience's new course, [Teens Learning to Lead](#), is a great way to help new interns get prepared for working with youth. It is a leadership course for high school and college-aged people designed for participants to complete on their own, or with a team.

For the full collection of July MGM resources, [please join our Facebook group](#) and access the July post!

TMC Spotlight

Ensuring Quality STEM Learning via TMC Labs – an Online Course

This past month, our partners with the Eastern South Dakota TMC mobile lab traveled to Alcester, SD. While onsite the students and staff were able to take part in one of our exciting new activities: strawberry DNA extraction.

Any good science experiment starts with a fresh reminder of safety and the importance of using personal protective equipment (PPE). It also helps that when students put on a lab coat, goggles, and gloves they start to FEEL like a scientist and that can make all the

difference.

Students started the procedure by selecting a strawberry and smashing it into tiny bits inside a plastic ziploc bag. This begins the breakdown of strawberry cell walls which ultimately allows us to extract DNA. Next, students and staff discuss the composition of cells and how beneath a cell wall is a highly flexible cell membrane. This membrane is more difficult to break apart through physical means so we must use chemical methods at this phase. Students made the connection that soapy water is effective in breaking down bacterial cell membranes and sanitizing our hands when we wash them. This same principle is true for strawberries, and this is why a solution of soapy water helps us break down the strawberry cell membrane and release the DNA contained within the cell. Students then filter the resulting solution and then carefully pour cold rubbing alcohol to force the DNA to rise out of the solution. At this phase we can use a toothpick or cotton swab to collect the DNA that comes out of solution where the alcohol and soapy strawberry layers meet.

What makes this experiment so impactful is that students are able to reliably obtain a result, and the scientific explanations at each phase can be differentiated based on the age of the students. Older students can explore the cell biology at play in greater detail, while younger students can focus on measuring, motor skills, and the idea that DNA is like a recipe for our bodies to make new cells.

This experiment uses simple household materials to create a learning opportunity that can be adjusted for nearly any age group. It's also a wonderful way to help students envision themselves as scientists and give them the confidence that they can do it.

– Jeff Sebern, Director of Programs, South Dakota Afterschool Network



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